THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

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"Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law" (PSALM 94: 12).

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A WHOLE LOAF OR A CRUMB.

SCRAPS of truth are to be found in every religion in the world, whether Christian or pagan, and this fact has caused many people to wonder. How is it that the golden rule has been enunciated by so many great teachers? Let it be said that the Savior was not the first person in the flesh to declare the great truth that we should do unto our neighbors as we should wish them to do unto us. No, there were wise men who taught the grand maxim in slightly different language before Jesus came to His fleshly tabernacle, among them being Pittacus, 650 B.C., Confucius, 500 B.C., Aristotle, 385 B.C., and Isocrates, 338 B.C. Not only was the golden rule taught before Christ, but other rules for the betterment of the race were made known through good men who lived well, according to their light.

The question as to how all these men could preach the doctrines of Christ before the Savior came, causes one not of our faith to marvel, for the reason that other churches of Christendom do not consider that the gospel was upon the earth before the coming of Jesus of Nazareth, the olden patriarchs being often represented as believing and practicing far from Christian principles and ordinances. This is a narrow view, and accords not with Holy Writ, nor with modern revelation from Heaven. From the Pearl of Great Price we learn that Adam was taught the first principles of the gospel as preached thousands of years later, and that he knew then of the coming of the Redeemer. That Redeemer, known to the Jews as Jehovah, appeared to many of the ancient prophets and committed the gospel to them. Through this means Enoch and his people became so perfect that they were translated. The New Testament speaks of the gospel as being preached unto Abraham (Gal. 3: 8), and this patriarch became the father of the faithful.

This, then, is the explanation of the existence of truths among the heathens before the meridian of time. The idolater might worship stone, or the sun, or the river, but still even with him there was some truth. He knew it was right to worship, only he knew not God. It is but natural that after the earth was flooded with living water the liquid would evaporate gradually, taking a long time to disappear altogether, if such a thing were possible, though the bulk of the flood would withdraw at once after the windows of heaven were closed, and there were no further outpouring.

When the Savior came to earth and established the Church, another outpouring of the gospel covered the earth, and when the apostasy caused the living word of God to subside and the authority of God to be taken away, fragments of the gospel principles remained, which condition is simply a repetition of what has occurred in past ages, and does not in any way disprove the actuality of the apostasy. Thus in each of the religions systems there is some truth, and because the world was not totally without the effects of Christ's teachings in the year 1830, the people have been slow to see the contrast between the whole gospel plan and small sections of it, but as the doctrines of Confucius, Mohammed, and others, were not sufficient to save mankind, so neither are the principles taught by the sects to-day, though such sects may name every principle of the primitive Church in their creeds and in their pulpits.

Our opponents of other churches frequently state that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints adds nothing to the good already in the world before its organization April 6, 1830. This view comes through a superficial investigation, or rather, none at all. I readily admit that many of the principles as taught in the New Testament are taught in name among the sectarian churches, but there is a great difference between name and substance. Even a fair delving into "Mormonism" would furnish abundant evidence of new truths not taught even in name by other systems of religion, while every term used in Christendom to denote a principle would have greater significance after such investigation. Remember that the Jews, at the birth of Christ, promulgated what they called the Law of Moses, but it was far from the Law delivered by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. In our day, to call sprinkling of infants a baptism does not make it such, and so with other things.

The gospel is the same in all ages. As God is unchangeable, so the story of God is unchangeable, though it may not always be made known to men in its fulness. Truth is eternal; it was not created. Before the foundation of the earth was laid, the plan of salvation was adopted. This plan consists of a code of principles or laws which are as old as God Himself. He did not create these eternal principles, but He simply adopted them. They were rules

already existing, which thereby became the laws upon obedience to which we might obtain salvation. And these truths have been revealed to men by the Author of redemption, Jehovah, and all the wise men who have preached righteousness in any age only gave to the world the things the Savior had revealed from heaven ages before His appearance in the flesh. It was His gospel just as much when Enoch believed and obeyed it, as when Paul did likewise.

Now, I ask our friends of other denominations who think "Mormonism" adds nothing to the truth which was in the world before the organization of the Church, to put all their religious tenets together and see if, by the wisdom they possess, by taking the saving principles from each and every sect on earth, of Christendom and heathendom, and discarding that which shall prove to be error, they can formulate a plan to equal the gospel as preached by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. And should they succeed, with the true pattern before them, in accomplishing this task, how are they going to supply the Holy Ghost and divine authority, without either of which no plan, however perfect, would be efficacious for the saving of the soul? Until they can offer us a superior system, let our sectarian friends take care lest they be found fighting against God. Let them not for shame deride Joseph Smith and the Church established by him through revelation from God.

I know men through their own wisdom cannot find out God, and I also know Latter-day Saints, through the gospel restored to earth through revelation to Joseph Smith, have found our God by means of the ministrations of the Holy Ghost, which is conferred by divine authority upon baptized believers, and through which come the gifts of "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." We offer the world a whole loaf. Come and eat.

Sunderland. PARLEY M. CONDIE.

A DEMOCRATIC CHURCH.

(BY A CLERICAL CORRESPONDENT TO THE *Daily Dispatch*).

EVERYONE who takes any interest at all in church affairs will rejoice to learn that at last a great movement is afoot for securing the wholesale abolition of abuses which have been sapping the church's strength for generations. The barter and sale of benefices, the pew-rent system, ceremonial outlawry, the eccentricities of patronage, the inequitable and ridiculous disproportion amongst clerical incomes, the security of the unsatisfactory incumbent from interference, the antiquated Prayer Book and Canons, bishops' palaces, superfluous dignitaries, undemocratic institutions, and all the rest of it—these are scandals which for years

have been denounced by laity and clergy alike; and nothing could have been more exasperating to the ordinary man than to see the church ever wearing the penitent sheet for short-comings which were still allowed to continue practically unchecked. It was inevitable that she should incur the suspicion of insincerity and hypocrisy, or, at the best, of a contemptible shiftlessness. To speak in the same breath of a living church and of overdue reforms seemed a contradiction in terms, and the church lost many of her best members in consequence. The working man, in particular, with his strong common sense and impatience of tradition, became merely bored by an organization which, in its attitude towards present-day realities, showed little but the stiff-jointed amiability of senile decay.

Nevertheless, the Church of England is not without excuse. By law established, and fettered with a thousand legal shackles, she cannot stir a finger without that help which the law is far too busy to extend. Unlikely though it may sound, the chief obstacle in the way of democratizing the church has been that pride of all democracies, the British Parliament. The categorical imperative of the mediæval Papacy was hardly more pernicious than the categorical negative of the modern Parliamentary system. The Reformation destroyed the former: to escape the latter will mean no less than a second Reformation, this time not protestant but assertive.

Not that Parliament has been deliberately unfriendly to the church. It simply has not the time—nor the specialized knowledge—for dealing with ecclesiastical affairs. From 1880-1913 no fewer than 217 bills for church reforms were introduced into the House of Commons. Of these 183 were dropped (of which 162 were never discussed at all), 33 were passed, and only one was negatived. In vain the church attempted to deal with the scandal of the sale of benefices. For this purpose 22 bills were introduced, and 21 were dropped for lack of time. In vain she tried to suppress ritualistic vagaries, introducing no fewer than 32 bills, of which only one was even debated, and all were dropped. In vain she attacked the blemishes of pew rents, inequitable endowments, an out-of-date Convocation, and other minor evils, but of the 27 bills so introduced, not a single one made any progress. Yet so fettered is the church in these matters that Acts of Parliament are often required for individual parishes. Imagine Westminister interrupting business of State to debate upon the graveyard of St. Somebody's, somewhere!

No wonder the Church of England turns envious eyes upon her younger and wiser sister, the established Church of Scotland, where freedom and independence in spiritual concerns have been found perfectly compatible with Parliamentary control.

Last year the Archbishop's Committee published its highly interesting report on the relations of church and state. It was

the psychological moment for such an important publication to appear. The divine discontent awakened by the war, the spiritual fervor of the national mission of hope, and to some extent the growing influence of the working classes, with their untrammelled mobility of intellect, all prepared the way for a serious grappling with the question at issue. And now it is being eagerly discussed in every Diocesan Conference and every parish Council. The Church Reform Association and the New Church Self-government Association are spreading knowledge and enthusiasm broadcast. The air is full of determination and hope. Here and there a voice is raised in the good, old-fashioned way "deprecating" interference with the *status quo*, and wailing that "this is not the time," etc., but the young and vigorous spirits have the church's future in their hands at last. The second reform has commenced!

For the first tangible step forward we must, of course, depend on the goodwill of Parliament, or, rather, of the Government in authority. The draft of an "enabling Bill conferring statutory powers upon the Church Council" has already been prepared. This "church council" will be a kind of Parliament of the whole Church of England, and all that we ask is, that the church, through her council, shall be allowed in future to make her own bye-laws, without trespassing upon the time of the National Legislature, yet subject always to its veto or intervention. It is a bill for the relief of Parliament no less than of the church. The future of the church will then lie in her own hands, and no one will be to blame but herself if she fails to reform. But there is no fear of that.

But will this "church council" be a body we can trust? Few men would be content to leave the future of their church in the hands of Convocation, with its utterly unrepresentative and purely clerical composition. Now the new church council will have nothing whatever to do with the old Convocations. Its constitution, as embodied in the Enabling Bill, is to be unimpeachably modern and democratic.

It will consist of (1) a House of Bishops, (2) a House of Clergy (mainly elected), and (3) a House of Laymen elected by the votes of every genuine member of the church. No measure shall be deemed to be passed unless it secures a majority of votes in each House, though, of course, any House may initiate legislative proposals. Thus the laity will at last have a responsible share in the management of their church.

Further than that, a special effort will be made to win the co-operation of the working classes, as distinctively such, in this new scheme of church government. A fixed number of industrial representatives will be included in the Council, exclusive of those elected in the usual way, and arrangements by which their election may be simplified and expedited are to be made. Moreover, those who cannot afford to lose wages or traveling expenses out of

pocket, are to have the same refunded from a diocesan fund for the purpose.

In fact, there is only one feature of the scheme which is undemocratic, and that is the deliberate exclusion of women representatives from the higher councils of the church. It is fairly obvious that the time for that kind of discrimination, especially in church affairs, is long since overpast.

Once get the Enabling Bill through Parliament, with the church council going in full swing, and a wide vista of noble possibilities opens before the church. The method of procedure will be as follows:—Any measure passed by the church council shall lie upon the tables of both Houses of Parliament for forty days. An Ecclesiastical Committee of the Privy Council will advise both church and Parliament on legal points. If their advice is favorable, the measure will become law at the expiry of forty days, unless opposed in either House of Parliament. Parliament, as is right, thus preserves the final voice in the established church, but it will not be tempted to obstruct church reform merely for political reasons, while still preserving the right, as at present, of introducing ecclesiastical legislation on its own account. And this extent of freedom we must have: freedom to breath, freedom to move, freedom to work out our long-impeded reconstruction.

WHAT IS A BILLION?

In these days the newspapers are full of items in which the words million and billion occur, and we read them with but the very faintest idea of what they stand for. Of course, everybody should know that a million is equivalent to a thousand thousands, and that, according to the American system of numeration, it takes a thousand millions to make a billion, but when the terms are applied to individual objects they convey no distinct idea except that of a vast number. A writer in the *Los Angeles Times* gives a few illustrations to impress upon his readers what a billion really means. He says, in part:

"A minute is such a trifling measure of time and a dollar is such a small sum. Yet, since the beginning of the Christian era there have been but a few more than a billion minutes, and the silver dollars would plate the sides of every war-ship in our Navy.

"If Rockefeller, assuming that he possessed a billion dollars, had his pile in silver dollars they would make a stack, piled as coins are ordinarily piled, 248 miles high. Set edge to edge these dollars would form a glittering ribbon from New York to Salt Lake City. To coin the dollars would require the use of 31,250 tons of silver, and to haul them to the mint would call for 2,083 freight-cars, drawn by 104 locomotives. The combined length of the trains carrying this fortune would be in excess of fourteen miles.

"At an ordinary valuation of agricultural lands in the best

farming sections of the country, a billionaire could buy a farm as large as the combined area of the States of New York, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. If he could purchase land at $1 an acre, he could buy all the territory of the United States east of Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico.

"Pictures have often been drawn of the wealthiest man counting his hoard; but he never counted it dollar by dollar. If he had the entire sum before him and could handle it as rapidly as his watch ticks—about $5 to the second—it would take him, working night and day, six years and four months to complete this task. If, of course, he worked on a union-labor scale, he would be just nineteen years on the job. In order to have it coined for this pastime, the mint would have to work making dollars for thirty-two years without pause, day or night.

"The speediest element with which the mind is acquainted is light, for we are not, it is claimed, yet certain of the speed of electricity. Light travels approximately at the rate of 186,000 miles a second, which, so far as earthly distances are concerned, is practically instantaneous. Yet, if a searchlight sufficiently powerful to cast its rays a billion miles into space were turned on from the earth, it would not light up its objective point more than two months afterwards. If our sole illumination were a sun a billion miles away and the fire were suddenly extinguished, we would see that sun for sixty-two days afterward, that length of time being required for the rush to the earth of the rays that were sent forth before its death.

"If a railway-train, proceeding at the rate of a mile a minute, had been, at the dawn of the Christian era, started round the earth on a straight track, its object being to run 1,000,000,000 miles without stop, it would have been necessary for that train to circle the earth 40,000 times, and it would not have come to the end of its journey until nearly New-year's eve, 1628—sixteen centuries after Christ was born. During its frantic flight it would have seen the Savior live and die; Rome rise, flourish, and decay; Britain discovered and vanquished by the Roman legions, and London and Paris built. It would have proceeded on its journey throughout the dark ages. It would have witnessed the birth of Columbus, the discovery of America, and have a couple of hundred years yet to continue."

Perhaps one of the most striking illustrations is that in which the speed of a bullet is made use of for comparison. An ordinary rifle bullet travels about half a mile a second. Now, the above-mentioned writer supposes, if a rifle a billion miles away were shot at a man (granting that the bullet would carry the distance), the intended victim and all his descendants for twenty-four generations would have plenty of time to pack up their household goods and move to the other side of the world to dodge the bullet, for it would not arrive for eight hundred years.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1917.

EDITORIAL.

ECCLESIASTICAL REFORMS.

In the contribution to the *Dispatch*, by a clerical correspondent, reproduced in this week's issue of the *Star*, our readers will find a great deal of food for reflection.

The abuses he enumerates, and which he candidly admits have been sapping the strength of the Anglican church for generations, are serious. That they have flourished, generation after generation, in spite of criticism by outsiders and protests from within, which frequently have taken the form of separatistic movements, is marvelous. The correspondent considers that Parliament is to blame for this. That body, he thinks, has not the time, and its members have not the specialized knowledge necessary for dealing with ecclesiastical affairs.

The remedy, therefore, in his opinion, is an ecclesiastical parliament, authorized to make the by-laws of the church, subject to the vote and intervention of Parliament. If such a body is created by the Government, the church will institute the reforms desired.

The first thought that comes to us on scrutinizing the plan suggested is, that the proposed ecclesiastical parliament seems to be a highly complicated affair, too cumbersome for practical purposes. It is to consist of a house of bishops, a house of clergy, and a house of laymen. The bishops, presumably, will have a right, by virtue of their office, to seats in the highest chamber; some of the clergymen will be elected to the next house below, while others will be appointed, by the bishops, probably, and the laymen are all to be elected to their more lowly estate. This would seem to give to the bishops the preponderance, especially if the clergymen, elected and appointed, are anxious to please their ecclesiastical superiors. Reform work would be slow, for any proposed measure would have to pass the three houses, and finally be accepted by Parliament, whose members, the correspondent admits, have neither the time nor the specialized knowledge for dealing with ecclesiastical affairs.

Why should not a church have a parliament consisting of only one house? Why should there be a class distinction drawn between bishops, clergymen, and laymen? Is that in accord with the Word of the Lord and the practice of the primitive church? If the conference in Jerusalem, called to consider the status of the Church relative to the Mosaic law (Acts 15), is taken as a pattern, a three-

house parliament is not scriptural, for the apostles and the elders and the "entire church" were gathered in one place (vv. 4-22); and, still more, the Holy Ghost (v. 28) was a member of that parliament and gave His sanction to the proceedings. It is to be feared the divine presence will not be felt in a divided house, where class distinction is to predominate to such an extent that bishops cannot associate with clergymen and laymen in a deliberative assembly, nor clergymen with the members of their flock, but each class has to be separated from the others by a high fence. It is an arrangement that does not look practical.

Another thought is this, that efforts to reform a church should be directed toward the root of the evil and not merely the visible shoots. Barter and sale of benefices, the pew-rent system, disproportion among clerical incomes, etc., are but symptoms of a diseased condition. The trouble is that, when churches deviate from the order of things instituted by our Savior, they must necessarily fall into all kinds of errors, and these cannot be corrected except by a complete return to the Lord and submission to His laws. A sickness is not cured by counteracting the symptoms by which the expert recognizes it, but by removing the cause of it. The same principle applies to any moral ailment; the reform must remove the cause of it.

There would never be any cause for complaint about pew-rents, if church members practised the law of tithing, according to the Word of God. There would not be such abuses as those referred to, if there were no salaried clergy, who have made preaching a "business" from which they expect a "living." That is the real evil. Abolish a salaried clergy, and preach the gospel for the love of it, and many abuses will disappear instantly.

One clergyman, the Rev. Elmer T. Clark, who is quoted in the *Literary Digest*, declares that dissatisfaction with the church is the most apparent religious feature of the social attitude of Europe, and that this is especially true of England, where the discontent lies against the Establishment. He says, in illustration of this proposition:

"On one occasion I was going to the British headquarters with a company of correspondents, under the escort of officers detailed for that task. Not one of the company knew me for a clergyman, and I purposely avoided referring to religious matters. But I was surprised to find that the subject was brought up time after time. The officers, all of whom, apparently, were communicants of the Established Church, were most outspoken against it. One of them referred to the Archbishop of Canterbury as a 'Victorian relic,' and when another was telling of the games and sports indulged in by the enlisted men, a laugh was caused by the question, 'Have the bishops interfered with you yet?' They freely predicted the disestablishment of the church, but there was general agreement when one said, 'But we must take care that religion does not suffer.'"

If this is a correct representation of the general sentiment, it would seem that no reform short of complete separation between church and state would meet the needs of our time.

Another thought may be presented in the form of a question. Would there be no danger in an ecclesiastical parliament with greatly extended legislative powers? Would not such a body be tempted to interfere with religious liberty? Perhaps not. It is, nevertheless, true, as we read in the Doctrine and Covenants (121: 39) that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, that they will immediately begin to exercise "unrighteous dominion."

There are some churches in this country which are not popular, because not known for what they really are, but misunderstood. Religious liberty has been safe in the care of the British Parliament. What it would be with an ecclesiastical body as its guardian is not clear. But one thing is certain, political freedom cannot endure very long unless men's consciences are left unshackled.

What the churches of the world to-day need by way of reform, is offered to them in the gospel of Jesus Christ, as proclaimed through the Prophet Joseph Smith. The message of the Lord to the world is, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 1:5). He does not put new wine in old bottles, or new patches on old cloth. His work is always new. And so the Church restored is not the product of reform, but of divine creation. She is not a branch of an age-worn, decayed tree, ready to fall because hollow and empty, but a new plant, sound and strong, a true descendant of that same Church of which our Lord assured His disciples that not even the gates of hell should prevail against it. The only reform that counts a great deal now is the acceptance of the new order established by our Lord through revelation. The Jews in vain sought to perpetuate their organization and religious ideas, when the Church of Christ was founded. It is just as futile now to try to save the religious organizations that are not founded on the word of God. The Church is again in the world among men, and their wisest and safest course is to accept it sincerely and with a firm determination to put its teachings into practice.

J. M. S.

THE MINUTES OF THE HULL CONFERENCE.

THE semi-annual meetings of the Hull conference were held in Foresters Hall, Charlotte Street, Hull, on Sunday, October 14th, 1917. President George F. Richards, of the European mission, Elder George F. Richards, Jr., of the Liverpool office, President William D. Lewis, and Elders Oliver G. Ellis and Harold L. Browning were in attendance. President William D. Lewis presided and conducted the meetings.

The morning session commenced at 10:30 by the congregation singing, "Ere you left your room this morning." Invocation was offered by President George H. Norman of Hull branch. Continued by singing, "Welcome, welcome, Sabbath morning."

The Sacrament gem was given by little Irene Wharram.

Sacrament was administered by President J. R. Skipworth and Brother William F. Bushel, and passed by Brothers Robert E. Watson and Frank Todd. The hymn, "Behold the great Redeemer die," was sung during the passing of the Sacrament.

The following program was then given: Song by Hull Second Primary girls; testimony of the Three Witnesses, Lily Bushel; Bible gems, Hull First Primary class; song, Leslie Bnson; recitation, Lonie Bawker; song, Irma Skipworth; parable, Olive Hudson; recitation, Annie Scott; song, Emily Watson; recitation, Evelyn Hall; duet, Stanley and Ivy Johnson; song, Hull First and Second Primary classes; gems from Doctrine and Covenants, Stanley Johnson and Alwyn Fairbanks; song, Ivy Skipworth.

Elder George F. Richards, Jr., said that from the selections rendered by the children and the spirit of the occasion, he was led to think of the words of the Savior, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." He observed that our experience on that occasion, with the little ones in our midst, was like a taste of heaven. He also referred to and read III. Nephi 17:11-25, which relates to another scene wherein Christ ministered unto the little children and blessed them.

President George F. Richards expressed the pleasure it afforded him to meet again the good people of the Hull conference in the worship of the Lord, and said that He to whom we are indebted for life and all its comforts and joys, and who has made provision through the gospel for our eternal happiness and salvation, has commanded us to love Him with all our hearts, souls, and minds, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. This is not an unreasonable requirement to make of us in view of all that He has done and intends to do for us. He has said that if we love Him we will keep His commandments, and that by keeping His commandments we shall be saved. He has also said that if we forgive men their trespasses, He will forgive us; but if we forgive not men their trespasses, He will not forgive our trespasses. We cannot be saved in our sins. They must be forgiven. Our salvation then depends upon these two great commandments. "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." We should look for and speak of one another's virtues, and not magnify or publish another's weaknesses. This will prove our love for others; for whom we love we will not make ashamed.

Closing hymn, "Thanks for the Sabbath school." Benediction by Brother William F. Bushel.

The afternoon session commenced at 2:30 o'clock by the con-

gregation singing, "There is sunshine in my soul." Invocation by Brother Thomas William Smith. Solo by Sister Ivy Norman.

The names of the general and local authorities of the Church were then presented by Elder Oliver G. Ellis, all of whom were unanimously sustained. Continued by singing, "Come, come, ye saints."

Elder Harold L. Browning expressed himself as pleased to be present and to partake of the good spirit. He was thankful to see so many present, and hoped all would enjoy hearing the word of the Lord.

Elder Oliver G. Ellis then addressed the meeting. He spoke on the gospel of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as being in accordance with the divine teachings of our Savior. We are, he said, led by inspired men of God, and believe in revelation. The Latter-day Saints are misunderstood by the people of the world, who are led astray by false reports. "He that answereth a matter before hearing it, it is folly and shame unto him." The mission of the Latter-day Saints is to teach the world the truth.

A solo, "Perfect Day," was rendered by President J. R. Skipworth.

Elder George F. Richards, Jr., spoke on the training, character, and accomplishments of the Prophet Joseph through divine power, from the view-point of the Scripture. "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." His name is known throughout the world for both good and evil, as was foretold by the angel Moroni. Childhood and youth are the impressionable periods of one's lifetime. The boy prophet's mind was moulded by his mother, who taught him to fear God, to have faith in Him and in the teachings of the Bible. Nor did he know but that all men are thoroughly trustworthy. His faith, truly childlike and unshaken in either God or man, at the suggestion of James 1:5, and in answer to earnest prayer, gave to him in the spring of 1820 a vision of the Father and the Son by which these facts are established: God has a body like unto man's—so has His Son Jesus Christ; the Father and the Son are separate and distinct beings; God has not ceased to reveal his mind and will to men; and that not one of the churches then in existence on earth was recognized of Him. The Prophet Joseph, in company with Oliver Cowdery, received later the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood under the hands of John the Baptist, and the Melchizedek Priesthood by the Apostles Peter, James, and John; and by God's authority he organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, on April 6th, 1830, with six members. Subsequently the First Presidency, the Twelve, and the Seventy were called. To-day the stability of the Church is world-known and acknowledged. The Prophet Joseph proclaimed a universal apostasy from the teachings of the primitive Church, and the restoration of the gospel in its fulness in this last dispensation. He

corrected erroneous doctrines and explained the plan of salvation for both the living and the dead. He taught the saints how to live to experience the joys of the just and true, and sealed his testimony by giving up his life at the hands of a cruel mob. Those who knew him best loved him most, and some historians have predicted that future generations will be influenced by his testimony and the work he established. Elder Richards bore a strong testimony to the divinity of the Prophet Joseph's life and ministry, to the truth revealed, and the work established by him.

Closing hymn, "If there's sunshine in your heart." Benediction by Brother Robert E. Watson.

The evening session was opened by singing, "An angel from on high." Invocation by President Gardham Stainton.

Sister Eva Jarman kindly favored the conference with a solo.

President George F. Richards said that the religion of the Latter-day Saints is an unpopular religion, and the Latter-day Saints themselves are an unpopular and persecuted people; but they are a good people, and their religion is true and of divine origin. If we and our religion are to be condemned and rejected because we are unpopular and persecuted, for similar reasons the former-day saints and their religion must be rejected and condemned, for they also were unpopular and a persecuted people. Many suffered death at the hands of their persecutors, as have many of the Latter-day Saints. "By their fruits ye shall know them" is the test Jesus gave. By this means, a people as well as a prophet may be known. The fruits of Joseph Smith and his followers are identical with those of the Savior and His disciples. The Scriptures reveal to us the fact that the Savior was chosen as such before He was born; that Abraham, Jeremiah, John the Baptist and others were chosen for their life's work before their birth in the flesh. The Latter-day Saints believe that Joseph Smith was one of God's noble ones, reserved to come to earth in this the last and greatest of all dispensations, and that the work of establishing the kingdom of God on earth and the restoration and preaching of the everlasting gospel in all the world in preparation for the coming of the King of kings to receive His kingdom, necessitated the appointment of one of the greatest of God's sons. That this was done is clearly seen in the mighty works accomplished by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Likewise, by their works, those who have succeeded him as presidents of this Church have proved that they have been inspired men of God.

The conference was then favored with a trio by Sisters Marion Barrett, Fannie Dalton, and President George H. Norman.

President William D. Lewis then said he felt grateful for the enjoyable conference, and thanked all those who had taken part. He said he felt thankful for being worthy of being one of God's servants.

The conference was brought to a close by singing the hymn,

"Lord, we ask thee ere we part." Benediction by President J. R. Skipworth.

On Saturday afternoon, at 4:30, a Priesthood and lady missionary meeting was held. The branch presidents were called upon to report the condition of their various organizations and the welfare of the saints, all giving favorable reports and expressing a desire for better conditions. The elders and lady missionaries also presented their reports. President George F. Richards gave some very valuable instructions and encouraged all to push forward in the good work.

OLIVER G. ELLIS, Clerk of Conference.

WAS JOSEPH SMITH A TRUE PROPHET?

ALTHOUGH as yet I am not a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I am, and have been for some time past, an interested investigator.

The heading I have chosen for my attempt as an author was taken for several reasons, which the reader will see for himself.

Through the influence of a very dear friend of mine I was brought in contact with the saints, or, as others call them, the "Mormons." At that time I knew little, or nothing, about them, but my meeting with their elders in my home town (Glasgow) soon made me take an interest in their work. From time to time I found myself asking, "Who was Joseph Smith, the founder of the Church of Latter-day Saints?" At last I determined to study this religion and find out all about this prophet. As I knew several elders and also the president of the Glasgow branch, I was never at a loss to obtain information.

Joseph Smith was born in the year 1805, in Sharon, Windsor County, Vermont, U.S.A., of humble parents. At the early age of fifteen, through his endeavors to find out which was the correct religion (as at that time there was great strife among the different churches), he prayed to God for counsel and the truth. Even at his early age, he was a believer in the promise, "Seek and ye shall find." He did seek and find, as we all know.

In the year 1820 he had his first vision. It was only natural that there should be doubters. He was only a boy, and this was, perhaps, the chief reason, at least among some; but I rather fancy that the chief reason of the refusal to believe was that the truth is always hard to believe. Does it not strike you, my readers, that this is correct? But if visions and revelations were given in the early age of the world, why not in 1820? Because for years there were no miracles, is that a sign that God's interest in His world has had an end? This boy who, we must remember, was uneducated, could not have carried out his great campaign of truth if he had not had the Spirit of the Lord to guide him, for, as his

career shows, he was in need of God's help, and if we look at the Church of Latter-day Saints to-day, compared with what it was in its early days, we must believe, whether we like it or not, that the Spirit of the Lord has been with the Church.

From the beginning to the end the Prophet Joseph was persecuted. Was not our Lord Himself persecuted? Even to-day the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is still persecuted by non-believers. We all believe in Christ's authority to preach the gospel. The Latter-day Saints claim, what no other Church can claim, authority from God. The Prophet Joseph, like others, sinned, but he repented and received forgiveness. Then he received a second vision; this was in 1823.

In his first vision he was told that none of the churches at that time had divine authority. In his second vision he was told of the true gospel and given the proof by the vision of the sealed plates, or Book of Mormon. He was shown in the vision where these plates were, in the Hill Cumorah. As he believed the vision, he looked there and found the plates, which had been buried for fourteen centuries by one Moroni, the last of a line of prophets of a people called the Nephites. Moroni was the son of Mormon, a Nephite prophet, and the plates which Joseph Smith saw in his second vision, contained the record of the Nephite prophets. The Prophet Moroni had buried them in the Hill Cumorah four centuries after Christ.

In Isaiah (29: 14) we read that "The Lord shall do a marvelous work among His people, even a marvelous work and a wonder." Was not the finding of the plates a "marvelous work and a wonder"? It introduces the gospel as predicted in Daniel (2: 29-44). "and in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Here, then, we have a prediction concerning Joseph Smith's authority to set up the Church. Has it not stood? Throughout all its trials the Church has stood, and each year grown stronger. Again I ask, Was not Joseph Smith a true prophet? And my answer is, without fear, "Yes."

If all investigate as I did, they will agree with me.

Some readers may wonder why I am not a member of the Church. My answer is: Having found that Joseph Smith was a true prophet, I have yet to understand the principles taught by him, of which the first is Faith. Well, I have faith, so it will not be long before I am a member of the Church of God. To those who are against "Mormonism" I would say, Go you and seek likewise, and the truth shall be made plain unto you.

Egypt. 2ND. LIEUT. T. M. MARTIN.

KNOWLEDGE directs practice, yet practice increases knowledge.

"JUDAH must return, Jerusalem must be rebuilt, and the Temple, and water come out from under the Temple, and the waters of the Dead Sea be healed. It will take some time to build the walls of the City and the Temple, etc., and all this must be done before the Son of Man will make His appearance."

—JOSEPH SMITH, THE PROPHET.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Baptisms.—A baptismal service was held in Hull (Hull conference) on Sunday morning, October 14th, 1917. President George F. Richards, of the European mission, spoke to the candidates on the sacredness and mode of baptism; also the necessity of authority to perform this ordinance. Three members were received into the Church. Elder Oliver G. Ellis officiated. The new members were confirmed by Elders George F. Richards, Jr., and Oliver G. Ellis. The service was well attended. A few investigators were also present.

A Correction.—Elder Leroy S. Dickson writes from Nottingham, October 13th, 1917: "I beg to correct a mistake made in reporting the baptismal service which was held at Mansfield (Nottingham conference) on September the 30th, 1917, which report appeared in the last issue of the *Millennial Star* (October 11th). The name of the (local) elder assisting in the confirmation, appears as Joseph H. Hayes; it should be William Hayes. I hope that you will be able to make this correction, and accept my apology."

Harvest Festival.—A harvest festival was held at Unity Hall, Derby branch (Nottingham conference), on Wednesday, October 3rd, 1917. A large variety of fruit and vegetables was given by saints and friends. After an interesting program rendered by the members of the Sunday school, the produce was sold for £1 7s., of which half was given to the Sunday school, and half to the Relief Society funds, says Elder Le Roy S. Dickson.

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